

phosphorylated, self-ligated, and transformed in *Escherichia coli*. Substitution of the nucleotide was confirmed by DNA-sequencing. Deletion and substitution of the spiral part of stem loop III was carried out by the fusion PCR (Virology 214, 611-618 (1995)). A forward primer (GGTTAAATTTTCGAGGTAAAAAATTGCTATA) containing nt6029-6050 and nt6062-6080 of PSIV sequence and a reverse primer containing nt27-5 of pT7Blue (Novagen, Inc.) were synthesized for the initial amplification to delete nucleotide (nt) 6051-6061. Then, a reverse primer (CCTCGAAATTTAACCAGATCACATAGTCAGCTTTC) containing nt6043-6029 and nt6017-5998 of PSIV sequence and a forward primer containing nt28-47 of pT7Blue (Novagen, Inc.) were synthesized for another initial amplification to delete nt6028-6018. Underlines of these primers indicate 15nt overlap of the fusion PCR. After each initial amplification using these two primer sets, two amplified DNA fragments were mixed and fused according to the description in Ref. 17. The final amplification was carried out using primers carrying nt28-47 and nt27-5 of pT7Blue, and the amplified DNA fragments were purified with a gel, phosphorylated, and ligated. The initial amplification was carried out using longer primers containing a substituted nucleotide to substitute the helical part.

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please substitute the following amended claims for the pending claims with the same numbers in the above-identified application. (A version of the amended claims with markings to show the changes made is also attached.)

1. (Amended) An RNA higher-order structure having a function for promoting a translation activity which comprises a base sequence selected from the group consisting of: